

REMARKS

Claims 1-13, 17-20, and 45-48 are pending herein.

I. The obviousness rejections based on Goodale (US 5,125,075) in view of Tsuji (US 6,047,315).

The USPTO respectfully rejects claims 1, 4, 9-11, 17-20 and 45-48 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Goodale (US 5,125,075) in view of Tsuji (US 6,047,315). Claims 1, 45, and 48 are independent claims.

A. The cited references do not teach or suggest a workflow system structured to take one of the specifically claimed actions when a circulation client is incapable of circulation because transmission of a file terminated incorrectly, as claimed in claim 1.

Claim 1 claims in relevant part:

“wherein when the next one of plurality of circulation clients is **incapable of circulation because the transmission of the circulation information file or the document file to the next one of the plurality of circulation clients terminates incorrectly**, said transmission client or one of said plurality of circulation clients, having sent said document file and said circulation information file to said next one of said plurality of circulation clients being incapable of circulation, conducts at least one of (1) notifying incapability of circulation by said next one of said plurality of circulation clients to other ones of said plurality of circulation clients or said transmission client, (2) sending said document file and said circulation information file to other one of said plurality of circulation clients next to said next one of said plurality of circulation clients, (3) sending said document file and said circulation information file to a proxy client of said next one of said plurality of circulation clients.” **(emphasis added)**

No new matter is introduced by the amendments. Support for the amendments is found on page 19, line 10 through page 20, line 11 of the present specification. Regarding these limitations, it is respectfully not seen where the cited references teach or suggest the claimed structure quoted above.

Specifically, as noted on page 3, line 17 through page 4, line 5 of the Office Action, the USPTO respectfully notes that Goodale does not explicitly teach taking one of the specifically claimed actions when the next one of the plurality of circulation clients is

incapable of circulation. The USPTO respectfully attempts to overcome this deficiency in the primary reference Goodale by citing Tsuji.

In particular, the USPTO alleges on page 13 of the Office Action that “the claims as written provide no real guidance as to why a client would be ‘incapable of circulation’,” and the USPTO respectfully interprets “incapability of circulation” as meaning unable to distribute a document of interest for any reason. The USPTO alleges that this interpretation is taught in column 5, lines 11-26 of Tsuji.

However, it is respectfully asserted that Tsuji does not teach or suggest taking one of the specifically claimed actions of claim 1 when a circulation client **is incapable of circulation because transmission of a file terminated incorrectly**, as claimed in claim 1. For example, in the information system taught in Tsuji, the transmission of a file to the alleged client actually terminates correctly, and the alleged notification of the sender does not take place after a deadline has passed (see Figure 7 and column 5, lines 11-26 of Tsuji). In other words, in Tsuji **there is a delay between the transmission of the file and the indication of the unsatisfied conditions**. Additionally, there is no determination in Tsuji regarding whether the transmission of the file terminated correctly. Instead, Tsuji focuses on whether or not the deadline has passed, which is independent from the termination of transmission.

In contrast, present Figures 1 and 3 illustrate one possible embodiment of the claimed structure quoted above. Specifically, as described at page 19, line 10 through page 20, line 11 of the present specification, when **transmission of a file fails to terminate correctly**, a number of actions can be taken. For example, disabled circulation report processor 23 specifies a client 2 to which the file is sent. Additionally, a report file is generated notifying a user that the circulation file cannot be sent to the next circulation client. Also, a proxy client can be specified to receive the file instead of the client incapable of transmission. Thus, pages 19-20 of the present specification describe **a workflow system to take one of the specifically claimed actions of claim 1 when a circulation client is incapable of circulation because transmission of a file terminated incorrectly**, as claimed in claim 1.

The claimed structure quoted above is important and non-trivial because it provides significant benefits over conventional systems. For example, in Tsuji, because an action is

only taken after a predetermined deadline has passed, there would be a delay between a failure of transmission and the notification. With the structure of claim 1, on the other hand, **one of the specifically claimed actions of claim 1 is taken immediately when transmission fails to terminate correctly.** Thus, the delay resulting from the system in Tsuji can be avoided.

Thus, it is respectfully asserted that the cited references, taken either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest all the claimed limitations of claim 1. Therefore, it is respectfully asserted that claim 1 is not obvious over the cited references.

B. The cited references do not teach or suggest determining if a destination is capable of circulating the document to a successive destination by determining if transmission of the document to the next destination terminated correctly, as claimed in claims 45 and 48.

Claim 45 claims in relevant part:

“determining if the next destination is capable of circulating the document to a successive destination by **determining if transmission of the document to the next destination terminated correctly.**” (emphasis added)

Claim 48 claims similar limitations. No new matter is added by the amendments. Support for the amendments is found on pages 19-20 of the present specification. Regarding these limitations, it is respectfully not seen where the cited references teach or suggest the claimed method quoted above.

Specifically, as noted above in part A, neither Goodale nor Tsuji teach or suggest determining whether transmission of a document terminated correctly. Instead, Tsuji only allegedly teaches that a notification is made after a predetermined deadline has passed. It is respectfully important to note that **Tsuji makes no determination as to whether transmission terminated correctly when determining whether or not the deadline has passed.**

Thus, it is respectfully asserted that the cited references, taken either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest all the claimed limitations of claims 45 and 48. Therefore, it is respectfully asserted that claims 45 and 48 are allowable.

C. The dependent claims.

As noted above, it is respectfully asserted that independent claims 1 and 45 are allowable, and therefore it is further respectfully asserted that dependent claims 4, 9-11, 17-20, and 46-47 are also allowable.

II. The obviousness rejections of claims 2, 3, and 5-8 based on Goodale in view of Tsuji in view of Mori (US 6,526,425).

As noted above, it is respectfully asserted that independent claim 1 is allowable, and it is further respectfully asserted that Mori does not overcome the deficiencies of Goodale and Tsuji described above in part I. Therefore, it is respectfully asserted that dependent claims 2, 3, and 5-8 are allowable.

III. The obviousness rejection of claim 12 based on Goodale in view of Tsuji in view of Murakami (US 2002/0161746).

As noted above, it is respectfully asserted that independent claim 1 is allowable, and it is further respectfully asserted that Murakami does not overcome the deficiencies of Goodale and Tsuji described above in part I. Therefore, it is respectfully asserted that dependent claim 12 is allowable.

IV. The obviousness rejection of claim 13 based on Goodale in view of Tsuji in view of Phillips (US 7,058,696).

As noted above, it is respectfully asserted that independent claim 1 is allowable, and it is further respectfully asserted that Phillips does not overcome the deficiencies of Goodale and Tsuji described above in part I. Therefore, it is respectfully asserted that dependent claim 13 is allowable.

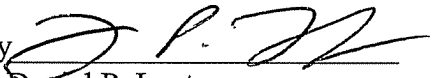
V. Conclusion.

Reconsideration and allowance of all of the claims is respectfully requested.

If there are any additional charges with respect to this Amendment or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 06-1130.

Please contact the undersigned for any reason. Applicants seek to cooperate with the Examiner including via telephone if convenient for the Examiner.

Respectfully submitted,

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